2007-04889/

250 Attend Junior High Symposium

Department of Education and Culture (to July 99)
April 30, 1998 10:05

More than 250 people from across the province are in Wolfville on Thursday, Apr. 30 and Friday, May 1, to share ideas on learning and success in junior high classrooms. Hosted by the Department of Education and Culture, the symposium allows participants to share best practices, refine school improvement proposals and further develop action plans.

"We are responding to calls from teachers, parents, administrators and communities to provide support for students during the critical middle years," said Education and Culture Minister Robbie Harrison. "We want to support our educators as they develop partnerships and share best practices -- to ensure the best learning opportunities for all junior high students in Nova Scotia."

The Junior High School Network was formed in September 1997 to focus school improvement efforts on student learning and success in the classroom. Nova Scotia is a leader in targeting funds to support junior high students. Fifty-seven schools, from all seven regional school boards, currently participate in the program.

A wide range of activities explore new approaches to teaching and learning, community partnerships and support for all areas of student life.

For example, some schools have adopted team teaching approaches. Teachers see fewer students in more subject areas to develop a better understanding of their students. Other schools focus on improving student success by giving parents a greater role in their children's learning.

All 57 schools are represented at the symposium -- the second in a series of conferences scheduled over the next four years. School teams include an administrator, a member of the school advisory council and two teachers.

Following the symposium, teachers, staffs and education partners will develop their school improvement plans. Improvement plans are supported by school-based research and information on best practices collected from outside Nova Scotia.

Schools currently not involved in the Junior High Network can apply through their regional school boards. A second round of applications is expected in May.

NOTE: The following is intended for use by broadcast media.

Representatives from 57 Nova Scotia junior high schools are in Wolfville to discuss ways to improve their classrooms.

The Junior High School Network is a forum for schools to share ideas on learning, teaching and community partnerships.

The 2-day symposium is the second in a series of provincial conferences scheduled over the next four years.

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ngr Apr. 30, 1998 10:05 a.m.

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